National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Word diffusion and climate science

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Abstract:

As public and political debates often demonstrate, a substantial disjoint can exist between the findings of science and the impact it has on the public. Using climate-change science as a case example, we reconsider the role of scientists in the information-dissemination process, our hypothesis being that important keywords used in climate science follow "boom and bust" fashion cycles in public usage. Representing this public usage through extraordinary new data on word frequencies in books published up to the year 2008, we show that a classic two-parameter social-diffusion model closely fits the comings and goings of many keywords over generational or longer time scales. We suggest that the fashions of word usage contributes an empirical, possibly regular, correlate to the impact of climate science on society.

Source: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3492395

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public, Researcher

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact: ☑

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Resource Type: ☑

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale: ☑

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified